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ABSTRACT

The expectation of educators for more than a decade has been that they would be aware of and attend to gender issues. The British Columbia Visual Arts Curricula states "Gender-equitable education will initially focus on girls in order to redress historical inequities." However, it is important to be informed about the issues that adversely affect the males in art education. This theme issue contains seven articles: (1) "Editor's View" (Sharon McCoubrey); (2) "Gender Socialization: A Brother and Sister Draw about War" (Robert Dalton); (3) "Gender and Teaching Art in the Early Years" (Cynthia Colbert); (4) "Rape--A Gender Issue" (Colleen Kennedy); (5) "Broad Reach: A Group of Women Artists" (Sharon McCoubrey); (6) "Resources Review"; and (7) "The Arts and Academic Improvement: What the Evidence Shows" (Ellen Winner; Lois Hetland). (BT)

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Gender Issues in Art Education.

Sharon McCoubrey, Editor

British Columbia Art Teachers' Association, Vancouver.

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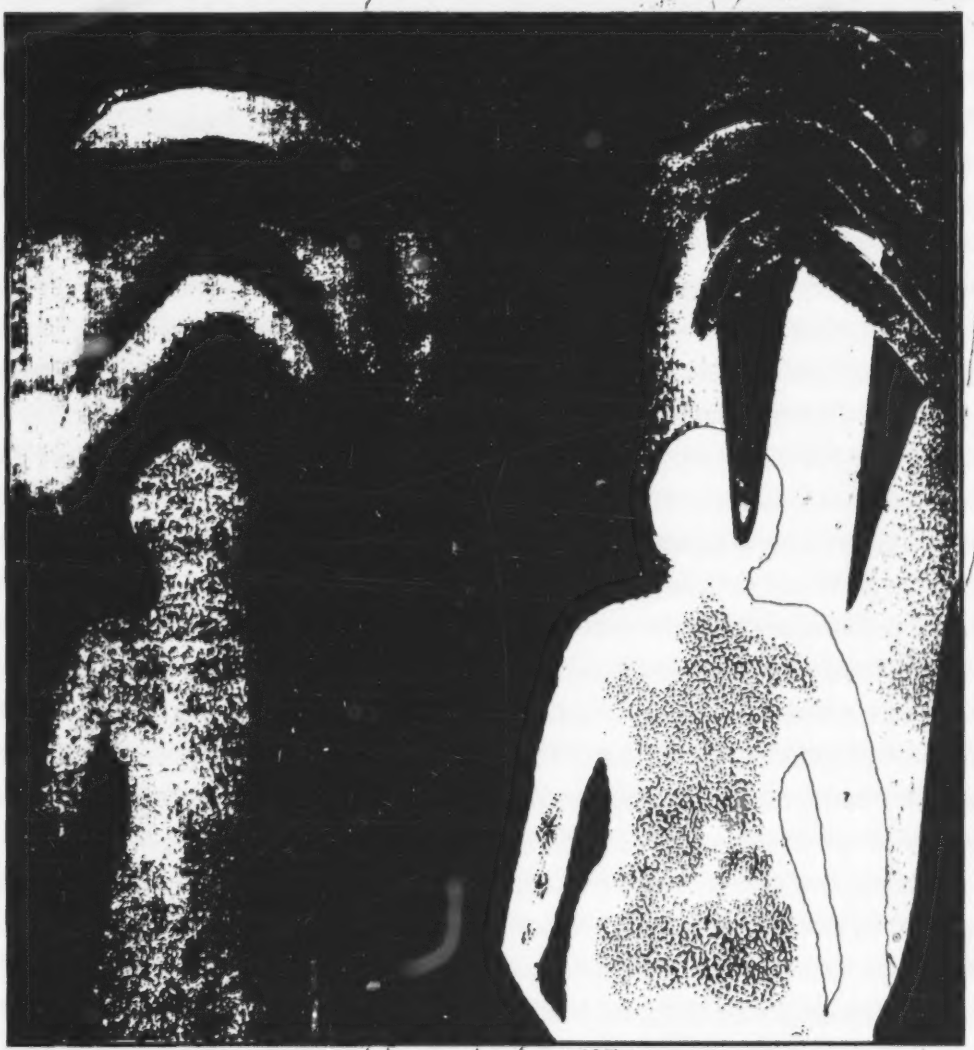

Chelsea Trone, Grade 11, Oak Bay Secondary School

GENDER ISSUES IN ART EDUCATION

The front cover art work is a Monotype Print created by Chelsea Trone, grade 11 at Oak Bay Secondary School in Victoria, BC. Additional artworks appear in this journal by Oak Bay Secondary School students, taught by Jennifer McIntyre.

Other artworks, tonal drawings, found in this journal were created by Jamie Flick's students at George Pringle Seondary School, in Kelowna, BC.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA ART TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

British Columbia Art Teachers' Association

Volume 40, No. 1, Summer 2000
Journal Editor: Sharon McCoubrey

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The BCATA Journal for Art Teachers is an official publication of the British Columbia Art Teachers' Association. The opinions expressed in the journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or the association.

Gender Issues in Art Education

The expectation upon educators for the last decade or more has been that they would be aware of and attend to gender issues; that school would be a setting in which one could count on fairness and attention to gender equity. But are we all aware of the various points of view related to this topic? Are we informed about the different issues? Are we sufficiently aware of our teaching practices, in all their subtleties, to be confident that we have met this expectation regarding gender issues? These questions are valid because this topic is complex.

Where is the injustice around this topic that has necessitated it surfacing as a current social concern? Perhaps what comes to mind most commonly with first thoughts about gender issues is the injustice to females as seen by centuries of exclusions, omissions, and biases that have resulted in a myriad of injustices and deprivations for women. The list of inequities toward women is long and discouraging. 'Persons Day' is an event which always strikes a cord of disbelief. Imagine! Prior to the 20th century, women were not officially considered persons. The Visual Arts Curricula states "Gender-equitable education will initially focus on girls in order to redress historical inequities" (C-8). We have come a long way in a few decades, but are we there yet?

However, it is important to also be informed about the issues which adversely affect the males in art education. We all know the potential danger of attention to inequities for girls resulting in a pendulum swing on this issue. Unfortunately, this Journal was not able to present all angles of all concerns related to gender issues, but in acknowledging that multiple perspective exist, we encourage you to become aware of concerns related to both males and females.

Bob Dalton's article on Gender Socialization profiles several interesting studies of how girls and boys typically respond in different situations, and has used the specific activity of drawing pictures about war to help us understand the inherent differences between males and females. This awareness is a prerequisite for gender equitable education.

Cynthia Colbert's article title implies early childhood education, but she has provided insights into this topic that are relevant for all ages of students. In addition to offering explanations of male and female development and needs, the author also gives us practical means of applying the issue to the classroom.

Editors View . . . *Continued*

Rape is the topic of Colleen Kennedy's profile of a recently published book which examined art images depicting this topic. Colleen's discussion serves as a "heads-up" for us all. The practices of Broad Reach, the group name of 11 women artists, offers an interesting example of how any group of artists might both stimulate and support each other.

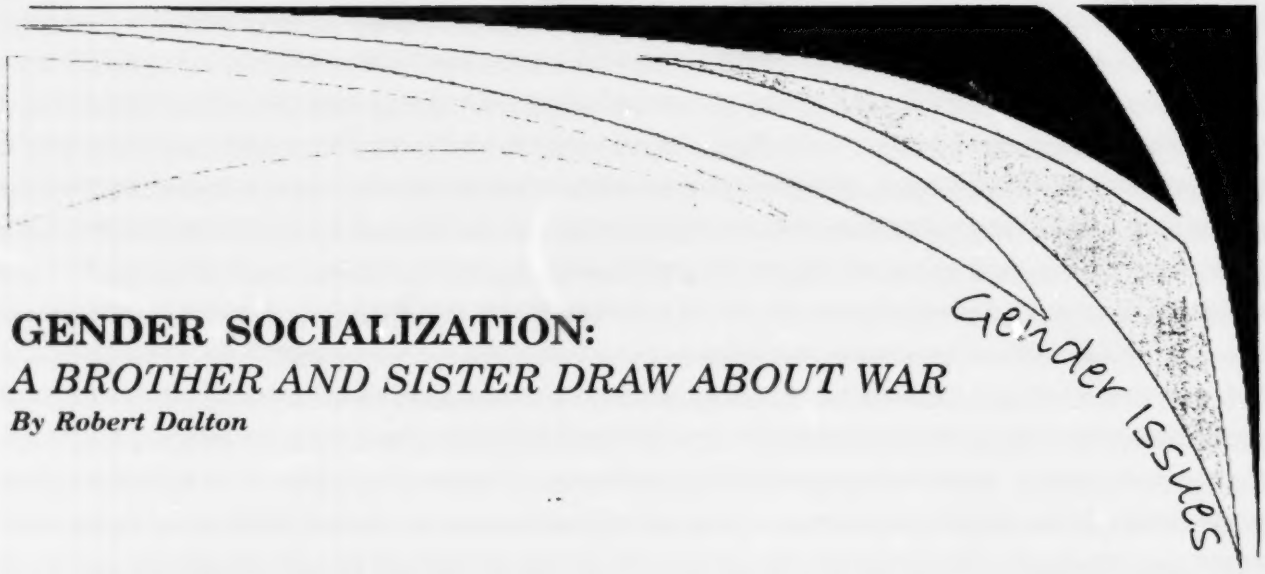
'And on Another Topic' in this Journal offers an executive summary of a currently debated topic in art education, that of the potential for experiences in art to enhance achievement in other subject areas, or, the justification for art education.

The mandated provincial Visual Arts curricula address the topic of gender issues in the appendix referred to as Cross-Curricular Interest. Five Principles of Gender Equity in Education are listed, which make reference to what might seem like obvious requirements, including an equitable learning environment, career decisions based on interests and abilities rather than gender, and cooperation and collaboration among all. Then, in order to provide specific and practical guidelines for teachers, 17 strategies for Gender-Equitable Teaching are listed. I encourage you to turn to this portion of your curriculum and read through this list which may draw our attention to aspects of gender equity we may not have previously been aware of.

We often hear that significant changes in understanding and approach to a specific issue, such as gender equity takes a full generation, or more. One of the essential reasons for each of us as educators to do our part to ensure gender equitable education is to provide the experiences which result in our students being free of gender based biases. As stated in our Visual Arts Curricula, "Gender equity requires sensitivity, determination, commitment and vigilance over time."

Journal Editor

Sharon McCoubrey



GENDER SOCIALIZATION:
A BROTHER AND SISTER DRAW ABOUT WAR

By Robert Dalton

Gender Identity

In popular literature, gender differences have been dramatized by such provocative titles as *Men are from Mars, women are from Venus* (Gray, 1992). More scholarly research on gender can be found in the work of feminists like Carol Gilligan (1982) who revealed significant differences in the ways men and women speak about moral problems and the ways they speak about relationships between other and self. Devor (1989) defines *gender role* as the actions, thoughts, behaviors, and beliefs that distinguish one as a member of a gender category. Gender roles prescribe the range of activities considered appropriate for males and females in particular societies.

While those prescribed roles may vary from one society to another, Chodorow (1974) has attempted to characterize masculine and feminine roles in global terms through the concepts of *agency* and *communion*; these describe fundamental aspects of all living forms. Agency is the existence of an organism as an individual, and is characterized by self-protection, self-assertion, and self-expansion. It separates, isolates, and seeks to master. Communion describes the participation of the individual within a large organism, it is characterized by union, contact, openness, and cooperation. For Chodorow, the masculine role tends toward agency and the feminine role tends toward communion.

There has been much discussion as to how we come to acquire a gender identity. Are we genetically programmed to think and act in masculine or feminine ways, or are we shaped by the society in which we are raised to conform to certain socially constructed roles: The "nurture versus nature" debate has been with us for a very long time (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974). There can be little doubt that nurture is a powerful force. Boys and girls are socialized to view the world somewhat differently, to think and act in ways that prepare them for the gender roles of adult life. In some countries and communities these differences are very pronounced while in others the differences are much less evident.

When a child is born we announce its sex and assign it a gender appropriate name. Boys and girls are dressed, handled, and even spoken to in different ways. Despite the fact that there are minimal physical differences between infant boys and girls, many parents tend to play more physically with boys than with girls, as though boys were more durable and girls more fragile (Devor, 1989). In another study reported by Devor, subjects listened to the sound of a baby crying. When told it was a boy, subjects said it sounded angry; when told it was a girl, subjects thought it sounded fearful. It is clear that interpretations of the cry

would lead to different responses from adult caregivers. From our earliest moments we experience life differently. Through the first years of life, children learn they are male or female and they are rewarded for actions that support their gender identity. There are negative sanctions as well for what are perceived to be inappropriate interests and actions. A child may be teased by peers for showing an interest in toys that "belong" to the other gender. Children observe more closely the actions of same sex adults, whether in the home and community, or on television.

Children internalize what they have learned and demonstrate their emerging gender identities through imaginative play. Studies on children's story telling, games, and drawings point to gender differences. To cite just two: in her studies of children's games, Lever (1976) found that boys tended to play by themselves or in large groups and their games are commonly more competitive and rule bound. She observed that boys would sometimes interrupt their play to wage heated arguments about violations of the rules and to settle disputes by negotiating new rules. Lever noted that girls tended to play with one or two "best friends" and their games are more often cooperative.

Sylvia Feinburg (1979) asked elementary students to create two drawings, one on the theme of helping and another on the subject of fighting. She found that girls tended to illustrate helping by some form of interpersonal relationship such as assisting a friend with homework or doing the dishes. Boys tended to illustrate helping in acts of heroism such as rescuing someone from a burning building. Similar differences were found with fighting. Girls were more likely to represent conflict in interpersonal terms such as an argument within the home; boys tended to depersonalize the conflict, one example being warfare. There have been many changes in society since Feinburg's study was completed and it would be interesting to replicate the research in order to learn if changing attitudes to gender can be seen in new perspectives within children's drawings.

Drawings of War as Imaginative Play and Recovery

Numerous studies have been done and exhibitions mounted of children's drawings of war where they have been close to the conflict and have suffered (Dale, 1986; Schwarcz, 1982; Tanay, 1995; UNICEF, 1993). In such cases, boys and girls are motivated to record their experiences; gender differences in the frequency and kind of drawings that result are less obvious. But when children draw for pleasure rather than recovery, gender differences are more apparent in the choice of subject matter and the ways in which the subject is developed.

The study reported here is part of a larger one that occurred during the Gulf War (Dalton, 1991); it stands between pleasure and recovery in that it took place at a considerable distance from an actual war. There are elements of both imaginative play and "coming to terms" with real events. The participants in the study were a ten-year-old boy "John" and his seven-year-old sister "Amy." They were middle class children living with their parents, both university professors, in Columbus, Ohio. While there is an age difference of three years, the children have experienced a similar upbringing and this makes for a particularly interesting comparison of gender socialization.

John had been doing war drawings for some time as a form of imaginative play. His parents did not approve of this activity but did not forbid it and John appeared to accept his parents' discomfort with such a violent subject. John's drawings were much like a sporting event with two teams identified by colour. Each "team" had the same weapons represented by symbols; there were aircraft, tanks, and other military equipment. And there were explosions - a "Fourth of July" fireworks display appeared as the warfare on paper reached its end.

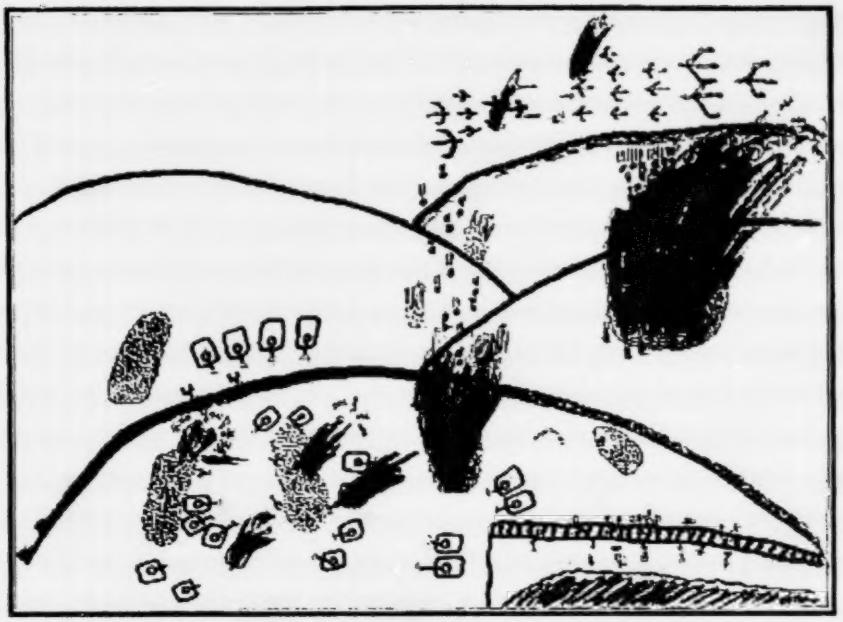


FIGURE 1. Aerial view of dot armies, drawn by John

In his aerial view (Figure 1) John drew dot armies assembled in the hills with tanks deployed around them and aircraft dropping bombs from above. He was interested in strategy and the "game" involved losses by both sides, much like a chess match. Adding to the danger is a rope ladder over a lava pit in the lower right corner (an idea he got from a computer game). John's sister Amy showed no interest in drawing such subjects and was therefore not initially going to be included in my study of war drawing.

Two weeks before I was scheduled to interview John to learn more about how and why he created his drawings, a momentous event occurred, one that had been building for some time. President George Bush advised the American people on television that Operation Desert Storm had begun. With their parents, John and Amy watched the news announcement on television. It was clear that the children took their cues from their parents, recognizing the gravity of the situation. Both children created drawings in response to this development.

John's drawing (Figure 2.) was no longer a contest between the blue team and red team, the combatants gained new identities - Americans and Iraqis. And while both forces were to experience losses in the conflict acted out in John's drawings, the Americans would surely prevail. John's compositions still involved depersonalized conflict viewed from a distant vantage point that allowed him to show the magnitude of the battle, and there were still lots of fireworks. But the process of drawing seemed to involve higher levels of excitement, probably because it was related to actual events. It is possible that in controlling the outcome of the war on paper, John may have felt reassured of a similar outcome in the Persian Gulf. This phenomenon has been observed in children's drawings from war zones (Schwarcz, 1982).

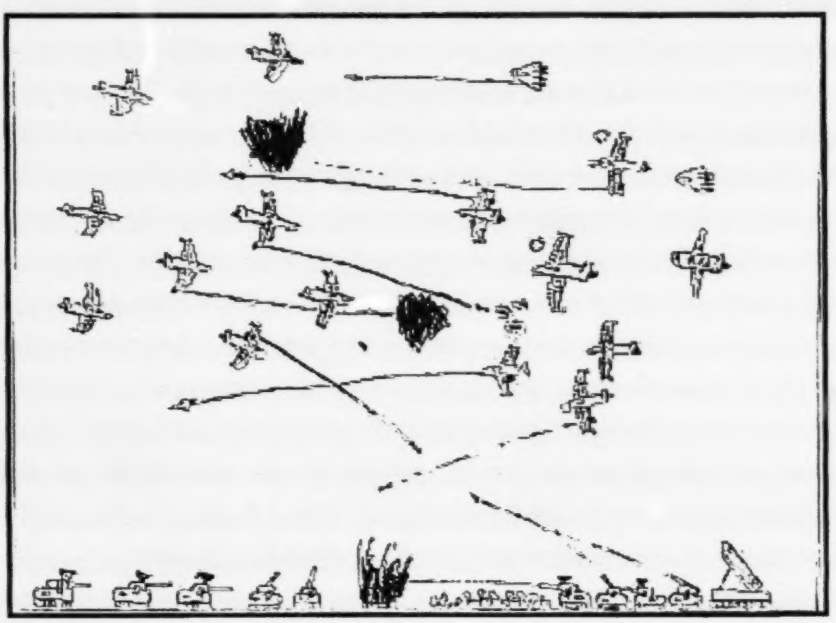


FIGURE 2. Gulf War action, drawn by John

Generally there is a higher emotional investment seen in children's drawings in response to an actual war and this was borne out in other children's drawings I observed - anger with Iraq and Saddam Hussein, ridicule of the Iraqi leader, pride in the American soldiers and their superior prowess in war, and other expressions of feeling (Dalton, 1991). John's excitement is characteristic of children who feel relatively safe. John did not suffer the uncertainty of separation from loved ones called away to fight in the war, nor did he fear for his own safety. Older than his sister, he probably had a better grasp of the distance separating the war zone and his home.

Amy's first drawing (Figure 3.) was done directly after hearing the announcement of war; it shows a television set with a man being interviewed. Speaking into a microphone held by a reporter off camera, he says "My dad's in the war." Overhead, a bumblebee shaped airplane drops bombs, while an insert in the upper left corner shows someone frightened by the war. Sound emanates from speakers on three sides of the television. In Amy's drawing, people are shown close up in order to reveal the affective aspects of pain and fear registered on their faces. People have huge frowns and tears spurt from their eyes. For Amy, war is about people hurting other people, something she has difficulty understanding and finds deeply troubling.

Her second drawing (Figure 4.) shows a row of Iraqi soldiers on the left confronting a row of American soldiers on the right, alternately armed with knives and pistols. A stabbed and bleeding soldier lies between the two opposing forces. In the upper left is a house with a crying civilian at the window. A dark sun hovers above the dramatic point where the two lines meet. While hand-to-hand combat was a very limited part of the Desert Storm, it nevertheless served to provide Amy with a suitable representation of conflict. For Amy, drawing was a means of coming to understand a difficult subject like violence. In later drawings it became apparent that she wanted to speak to other children about the serious consequences of war. Those drawings contained printed messages such as "kids this isint funy [sic]." Amy's drawings are more like those of children who have experienced war. Involvement in this genre was new to her. The highly emotional expressions on the faces of the people she drew, is another feature; even nature reflects the sadness through the use of a frowning sun. In the process of creating six drawings, Amy finally externalized many of the uncomfortable feelings and troubling ideas, and in her final drawing the sun once again smiled. There were no more soldiers and no more suffering. War drawing was a brief episode in her life.

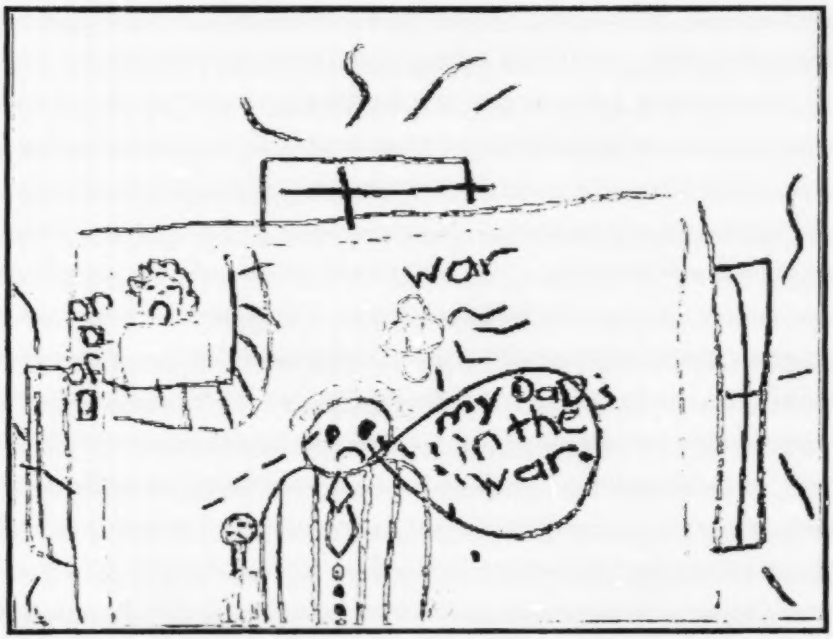


FIGURE 3. Televised announcement of the Gulf War, drawn by Amy

In John's drawings, aspects of gender socialization can be seen - an interest in structures and strategies, adventure on a grand scale, mechanization and power. The sky is filled with jets firing missiles of various kinds such as heat seeking missiles identified by dotted lines surrounding them. The aircraft are viewed from above so their wings can be fully

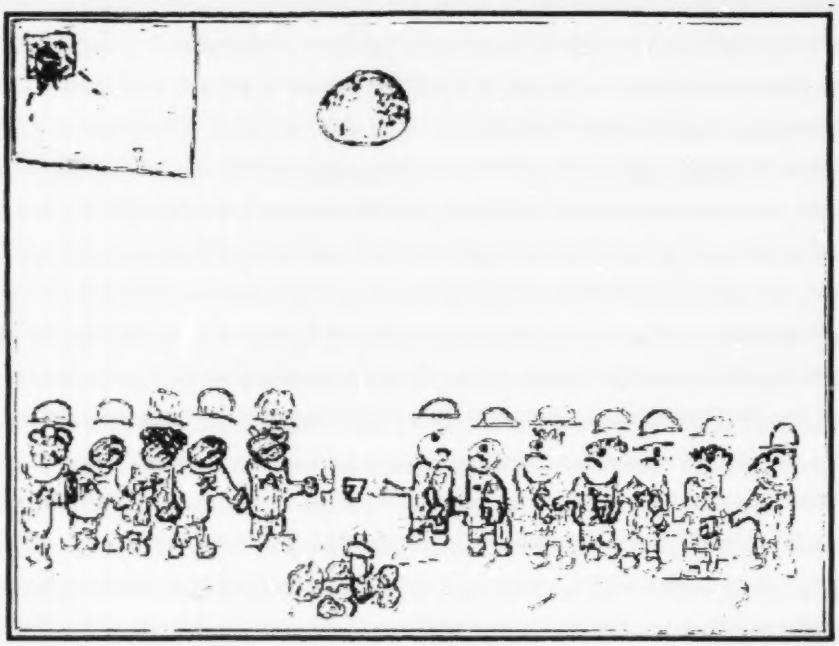


FIGURE 4. Gulf War with casualty, drawn by Amy

displayed and the two formations are on a collision course. Like the lines of tanks on the baseline below and the stick figure soldiers, the opposing forces remain separated by an imaginary boundary as in Amy's drawings. American forces are identifiable by a tomahawk missile launcher on the extreme right; insignia on the aircraft also distinguish IR (Iraqi) from U.S. warplanes. The American aircraft consist of a variety of planes including a B-52 and a stealth bomber. Clearly John knows more about weaponry than does his sister. Exploded aircraft are scribbled out and more missiles streak toward their targets or miss them.

Marjorie and Brent Wilson (1982) described boys' spontaneous drawings as full of "violence, villainy, and vehicles." Though their use of alliteration is clever, the word "villainy" may cause some readers to wonder if such drawings contribute to villainous behavior. My research found no relationship between graphic violence and anti-social behavior. There is a moral aspect to boys' war drawings - noble causes and a desire to see good triumph over evil. Aspects of gender socialization can be seen in Amy's drawings as well; Amy is attentive to interpersonal relationships. Her position is also a moral one, deploring "man's inhumanity to man."

Questions and Conclusions

The opportunity to study two children within the same family, both of whom created war drawings, invites comparisons about one obvious way in which they differ - gender. This snapshot however, cannot lead to general statements about all children everywhere; *generalizability* is not the goal or purpose of a study such as this. Indeed, human behavior is so complex that generalizations are usually inadequate. Truth in human affairs is better approximated by statements that are rich with a sense of human encounter (Stake, 1988). Teachers and parents are typically more interested in understanding individuals rather than predictions about how all children will behave. This study is descriptive and the value of such work is one of *verisimilitude* - case studies are useful if they seem to enrich our understanding of other "like" cases.

Descriptive studies of gender often lead from discussions of "what is" to "what ought to be." Are gender differences within our own time and culture too wide or too narrow? Are there inequities between genders? Within a particular gender do we accept difference or are we intolerant of behaviors that we regard as distant from the socially prescribed ideal? These are all important questions to address but they are beyond the scope of this study. More to the point however, is adult reaction to children's drawings. Drawings provide a window to understanding the world of the child. As parents and art teachers, should we attempt to influence our children's emerging gender identities and wider beliefs about morality through encouraging or discouraging particular themes? John's parents were uncomfortable with war

drawing because they find war disturbing. But though they didn't display his war drawings on the refrigerator, they nevertheless accepted John's interest in making them and made no effort to forbid such activities. They were careful to avoid any suggestion that John was a bad person for doing such things. How can we openly yet sensitively discuss our reactions to subject matter in ways that help children understand other points of view? These are kinds of decisions that educators frequently face and this is why teaching is so challenging and important.

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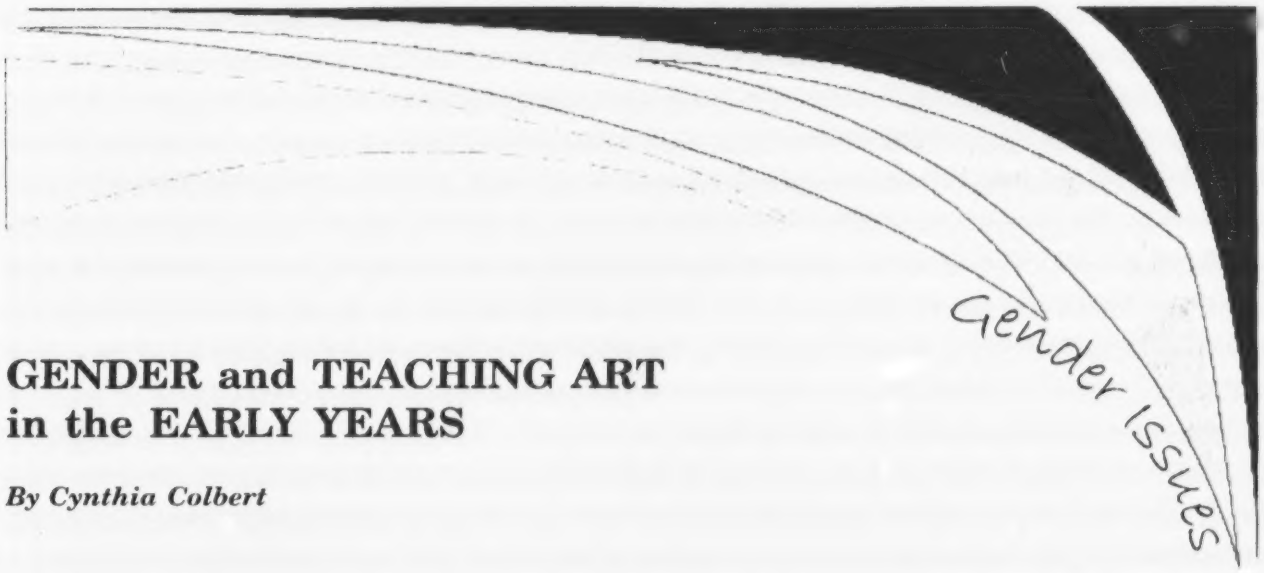

GENDER and TEACHING ART in the EARLY YEARS

By Cynthia Colbert

The issue of gender in visual arts education is often addressed by the study of women artists and the inclusion of women artists in the large reproductions used in the elementary art classroom. Not long ago, most art students were aware of relatively few women artists. Many art teachers were not introduced to women artists in their undergraduate training and it is to their credit that they have sought to enrich the instruction in their own classrooms by studying the work of female artists to share with their own students. Teachers are beginning to understand the importance of teaching about a diverse group of artists and as they seek information and sources to support instruction, they seem to be energized by their attempts to improve instruction. In my own state, policies for public school textbook adoption now require that works of art used in the texts represent artists of many different cultural and ethnic origins and that texts offer a balance of male and female artists.

Issues of gender as a pedagogical force are not as clearly defined in art education. We know from many research studies that there are differences in the ways that males and females learn. Gardner's (1993) work on multiple intelligences has sensitized educators to the differences in the ways students learn, but he makes few references to issues of gender in those differences. Gardner's work brings to mind earlier work by Bakan (1966), Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1979), McMillian (1982) and others who have studied the development of what are believed to be feminine traits (such as interdependence, intimacy, nurturance and contextual thought) against a backdrop of developmental theories based on men's experiences, showing that feminine traits are possibly undervalued in a society that champions logical, mathematical thought to the exclusion of interpersonal behaviors. (Colbert, 1990)

Gallas's work recognizes the differences among children's needs to express their knowledge in many forms. She further develops ways a teacher can work within a classroom setting to accommodate those differences. (Gallas, 1994). Her later work on power, gender, and identity in the primary classroom offers readers descriptions of individual students and how they negotiate with peers and teachers in the classroom. Gallas introduces her readers to the beautiful child who is stimulated by responses to her and begins the cycle of becoming an object. Gallas says that the child is at first confused by the attention she is receiving and then becomes so aware of it that she can perform or pose in certain ways to cause results. (Gallas, 1998, p. 59). Gallas covers "gross talk" by boys, creative story time where classmates appear in their peer's stories

as ways of negotiating power among the learning community. (Gallas, 1998).

Little emphasis on gender differences is found in teacher education programs. Chapters on gender differences are found in psychology texts, but the emphasis on these differences in a psychology or educational psychology class does not sustain the student who needs to put these ideas into practice in methods and practica courses where they are often forgotten. Classroom research, such as Gallas's work, is a good place for preservice teachers to "see" the dynamics of gender and power in the classroom and to begin to consider how they will handle these issues in classrooms of their own.

Developmental Differences in Males and Females

In the drawings produced by young children, developmental differences that can be attributed to gender have been documented by several researchers. Drawings of humans by young boys differ from drawings by girls in that boys more often include teeth and ears. Research studies have shown that girls are ahead of boys in the drawings of humans they produce during early childhood. Willsdon (1977) found that young boys took up to six months longer to create human figures with a distinct trunk and six months longer to produce figures with a waist when compared with the drawings of young girls. Willsdon also reported that girls used double lines to represent legs up to six months ahead of boys, and created figures with double lines for arms up to twelve months ahead of boys. In using double lines for both arms and legs in the same figure, girls were again ahead of boys by at least six months. Willsdon's work shows that girls produced far more clothed figures between the ages of four-and-a-half and six years than boys did. He found that girls produced figure drawings of a clearly identifiable gender before boys did. Willsdon also found that boys showed a greater tendency to stay with the creation of scribbles up to the age of 5 years.

Mortensen (1991) studied 540 human figure drawings made by 90 male and 90 female Danish children. She reports that girls showed a superiority in drawing both male and female figures between the ages of eight and ten years. When only drawings of the female figure were considered, girls produced superior drawings from the ages of seven to thirteen years.

In another study of human figure drawings, Koppitz (1965) reports on the effect of the drawing medium, comparing pencil and crayon drawings made by kindergarten children. Koppitz cites observations during the individual testing of 45 boys and 49 girls that revealed differences in the behaviors of boys and girls. Boys were described as awkward and shy, lacking experience in using the thin No. 2 pencils and showing difficulty manipulating the pencil. Girls were more at ease and poised. They appeared to like the special attention paid to them in this study and considered the thin pencil a challenge. Koppitz describes the girls as putting forth special effort to show off their drawing skills in a way of seeking approval. She further explains that the fine muscle coordination of the girls was far better than the muscle coordination seen in the boys.

Art teachers also report gender differences in the art work of girls and boys. Boys often prefer to create scenes that depict action, sometimes violent action. Boys may be overheard creating the sounds of the picture as they create the drawing or painting. Girls often create drawings or paintings that depict idealized beauty, such as a home with many flowers with a rainbow overhead, or pretty girls in fancy dresses. Some girls tend to be overly concerned with neatness and order in their work. These are stereotypical gender behaviors that art and early childhood teachers see in their classrooms. Not all boys or all girls behave in these ways.

Addressing Differences in Gender in the Classroom

Stereotypical responses to drawing assignments by male and female students offer teachers exciting challenges. Trying to help the child who is overly concerned with neatness and correctness to feel free enough to take risks and encourage

experimentation is part of what makes teaching art challenging. Encouraging the boy who repeatedly draws battles to find out more about the equipment used in the battle or the landscape where the battle took place is just one way of improving his drawings, but also offers him an avenue into the world of researching ideas using books. Teachers of young children are encouraged to individualize their responses to children's artistic efforts, treating children, their interests and their artistic creations with respect and helping them to grow and move forward.

Art teachers also need to become aware of a growing area of classroom research that shows that although girls seem to be doing well in school, things may not be what they appear to be. Girls get better grades than boys and receive fewer punishments than boys. They are quieter, more conforming and are generally the elementary school's ideal students. The result of girls' good behavior is that they receive less time, help, fewer challenges, and are rewarded for passive behavior. Girls' independence and self-esteem suffer. (Sadker and Sadker, 1994, p. 44). Under the care of well-meaning professionals, school children are often treated in ways that are gender-biased. Increased awareness of gender bias means that teachers can become vigilant that bias does not occur. Sadker and Sadker (1994) report that boys dominate the classrooms of America. Girls, taught to be obedient and kind, are not getting equal opportunities to speak, nor are they receiving equal attention from their teachers. Girls are often reinforced for looking pretty and being nice, kind or neat. Boys are told that they are smart, clever or agile. Even on report cards, teachers write that girls are a delight to teach, describe them as sweet and kind and tell little of substance about their intellectual development. Girls appear to be successful in school because they receive good grades and are less likely to be reprimanded for inappropriate behaviors. Teachers often depend on the "goodness" of girls who are left to work on their own and use their energies to teach and work with the boys. Males tend to dominate the classroom discussion, have more interaction with teachers, receive more constructive criticism and are given more time to answer questions. (Sadker and Sadker, 1994)

In settings with children as young as pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, researchers have documented that teachers gave boys extended directions on how to do things, whereas they more often did the work for the girls. One example given is using the stapler on a construction project. Serbin and O'Leary (1975) found that when a boy didn't know how to use the stapler, the teacher showed him. When a girl didn't know how to use the stapler, the teacher took the work from the girl and did it for her. Janzen (1992) found similar practice in a kindergarten of the 1990's. When girls wanted to view a video tape, the aide did it for them. The aide taught the boys how to insert the tape, and how to operate the video equipment. When the boys wanted to watch a video tape, they operated the VCR by themselves.

Art teachers need to be aware of research findings that suggest that teachers teach the boys manipulative skills, but do the work for the girls. Teachers need to make sure that students do their own cutting, pasting, tearing, modeling and gluing without hands-on help from the teacher. Because of the active, hands-on nature of the visual arts, there may be fewer problems of boys dominating discussion in the art class. Yet, young female art students, such as a female second grader who plans to be a Disney animator, complain that the boys often don't take the class as seriously as she does. She is bothered by the lack of respect and inattention of many of her male classmates, but claims that it doesn't bother her work too much because she is so interested in art. A third grade girl says that in art class she often feels rushed and would like to have more time to complete her work. She says that some of her classmates do good work and finish before she does, but others are not working as hard as she is and finish their work much too quickly, not doing a good job. She feels that the art teacher is often forced to move on to another lesson by these students, while she is forced to finish her work more quickly than she would like. Art

teachers also cite the problem of students who finish work too quickly, and who are not really involved in the work as their main classroom concern. Many of these students who seem to hurry through their work are boys, but a number of them are also girls (Colbert, 1996).

Sadker and Sadker's (1994) classroom research has shown that only about one third of teacher interactions offer feedback concerning remediation. They find that teachers offering criticism is even more rare. Yet, children need to know how they are doing and how they can do better. For the child engaged in making a work of art, feedback is often crucial to the success of the work and the self-esteem of the student.

When left to their own devices, second and third grade boys and girls often segregate themselves into two groups. Raphaela Best (1983) is an anthropologist who spent over a thousand hours living among schoolchildren. She watched the gender segregation firsthand, concluding that elementary schools consist of separate and unequal worlds for our children that are based on gender. She observed the same children for four years and watched as the separation of children by gender grew more pronounced. She especially noted the rigid gender-based segregation in the lunchroom, which had open seating. Best found that by the third grade, boys established a males only lunch table. Because unassigned seating may be found in many elementary art classrooms, where the seating is often arranged around tables that seat 4 to 6 children, self-segregation of children based on gender may be a problem for students. Many art teachers have assigned seating arrangements. But, for teachers who allow students to choose their own seating arrangements, the room may be divided into "boy bastions" and "girl ghettos" (Sadker and Sadker, 1994, p.59). Art teachers need to be thoughtful about the seating arrangement in their classrooms, careful not to punish a cooperative girl by placing her as a buffer on a table with disruptive boys, nor humiliate a boy by placing him with all girls. Art teachers must decide how to handle the classroom seating arrangement in ways that best serve their instruction and their students' abilities to benefit from that instruction.

Women are writing their memories of their own schooling, bringing to light the many ways they were slighted as girls. In a guest editorial, an eighteen-year-old girl paints a depressing picture of how athletic girls are socialized. (Sittenfeld, 1993) Others tell of teachers who set out to make tomboys into ladies using cruel forms of persecution to change the natural behaviors of young girls into the unnatural behaviors of ladies. (Rider, 1994) Many girls studying art in the 1960's and 1970's may not have seriously considered becoming artists themselves, as they may have never seen a photograph or a work of art created by a professional female artist used in the art classroom.

Putting What You Know About Gender Bias to Work

There are many avenues teachers can take to correct classroom behaviors that slight girls. Calling on students in a boy-girl-boy-girl sequence is one way to divide the classroom discussion time more fairly. Asking girls to carry books, boxes or equipment within the school shows that you recognize that girls are competent to perform physical tasks. Making efforts to compliment girls on achievement or performance, rather than on their appearance is important to making girls believe that what they learn and what they can do is more important than how they look.

Holding all children, male and female, to the same standards of behavior is an important step in achieving education equity for all. When teachers and parents say, "Sam's all boy," or "boys will be boys," usually some inappropriate behavior is being excused based on gender. Teachers need to monitor themselves, their verbal exchanges with students and their actions in the classrooms, to check for gender bias. Teachers might make audio or video recordings of themselves for an hour or for several class periods and evaluate themselves for gender bias in their own classrooms. Reading accounts of classroom research on education and gender will give teachers relevant classroom examples and a good frame of reference for self-evaluation.

Art teachers need to be aware that developmental differences in drawing abilities exist between male and female students, especially in the early years. Teachers should design centers, lessons and activities for success-oriented experiences for both boys and girls. Teachers need to take care to praise children's art at whatever level they may be working and make sure that lesson plans for young children are not overly geared towards realistic representation if all students are not capable of making representational art. Use materials that are inclusive, with male and females from a variety of cultures and ethnic origins. Collect art images, books and magazines that are available for students to explore on their own. Talk about the lives of male and female artists with children, using "she" and "he" when discussing artists, so that children will know that artists are both males and females. Tell about artists' early childhood art experiences, how they became artists, where they grew up or other information of interest to young children. When teaching myths, legends or folktales, teachers should make sure to include females as well as males as subjects of the tales studied.

It is important that children participate in developmentally appropriate art learning experiences that are designed especially for their level of technical and cognitive development (Colbert and Taunton, 1993). It is equally important that young children are exposed to a variety of works of art that represent different time periods, styles, materials, cultural and ethnic diversity and are balanced for gender. Young children need to hear artists referred to as "she" as well as "he," and they need to see works of art that go beyond painting, drawing, printmaking and sculpture to include baskets, pottery, quilts and traditional crafts. Teachers of young children need to create a well balanced collection of art images to share with their students.

In my own elementary art classroom, I seat children in a boy, girl, boy, girl sequence. I take pains to call on both boys and girls, but do not alternate in a systematic way. I am aware of keeping compliments on appearance to a minimum and try to compliment children on their ideas or their work, not their dress or hair. I do comment positively on new glasses or braces, but make every attempt to do so privately. I use many reproductions of works of art by women artists, artists from different parts of the world and from different ethnic backgrounds. In my early primary classes, I use many picture books by and about male and female artists, athletes, scientists, or what ever is appropriate for the topic under study. Unlike Gallas's community of learners, in my kindergarten group this year, most of the outbursts and losses of composure have occurred with girls. Two girls, in particular, have repeatedly shown difficulties in getting along. There are no male students in this art class who have exhibited similar problems. Another girl in this class is so bossy, peers complain to me each week about her behavior. I notice that a male peer equals her bossiness, but has more finesse in delivering his demands.

In early childhood education, the focus is on the child, not the subject and on the process, not the product. The visual arts are infused or integrated with skills and concepts from other content areas and are taught daily, not always by a certified art teacher. Teachers who assist young children in their explorations in the visual arts are privy to moments of pure joy and discovery. In the celebration of the uniqueness of individual children and their work, be vigilant to insure the standards for multicultural and nonsexist experiences are met.

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Gender Issues

RAPE - A GENDER ISSUE?

By Colleen Kennedy

I have previously reviewed this topic in an article in "Visually Speaking" (Spring 2000). At that time I was asked to present a book review on the text "Images Of Rape", by Diane Wolfthal. Since that presentation I have again been asked to re-visit this text within the consideration of Gender Issues.

Expanding therefore on the previous Book Review, you might recall that this text was an attempt to address Art Illustrations of Rape from the Twelfth to the Seventeenth Centuries in Western Art. The implications for the viewing of people as nothing more than an object upon which the brutal subject of Rape is perpetrated offers many insights into the modern world we now live in.

Historically there are quite a few examples of Rape having been presented to all of us. We were perhaps naive or innocent of the many actual implications and those in the know would usually redirect any inquiries or ignore them, claiming ignorance of the image themselves. What happens then to a society that admits to a crime, even illustrates it for hundreds and hundreds of years, and yet considers it such a taboo that it is not discussed for fear of offending delicate ears?

Wolfthal has done a thorough job of attempting to define the past so that we can judge the present. She states that one of her primary goals was to try to recapture the muted and silent voices of the rape victims, to see the violation from their point of view. She feels that she parts

Nicolas Poussin, Rape of the Sabine Women, ca 1636-7, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

company with several contemporary theorists who see only a relationship between sex and power. She presents many examples of different "types" of Rape. One of these is the Heroic. This topic is clearly illustrated in the work "Rape of the Sabine Women" (1636) by Poussin. – New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

To quote directly from Diane Wolfthal's text regarding this image, we find on pages 7-9 and 19 of this text, the following outstanding summary:

"Poussin's Rape of the Sabines

Poussin's Rape of the Sabines, painted in the 1630's and today in the New York Metropolitan Museum, may well be the rape image most familiar to American art historians. It illustrated an episode from the early history of ancient Rome. The Romans, unable to obtain wives peacefully, staged a festival, invited the neighboring Sabines, and, at a signal from Romulus, each violently seized a Sabine woman. Art historians generally focus on Poussin's classical style or his sources in ancient art and literature. The painting is often termed "heroic" or cited as an embodiment of Poussin's belief that the highest goal of art is the depiction of noble human action. Avigdor Arikha, for example, finds the work "sublime...heroic...divine" and argues that "Poussin looked for nobility in his subject."

Certainly in Italy, in the fourteenth through seventeenth centuries, the incident was viewed as a heroic, patriotic act. The Sabine women were revered as the mothers of the first Romans. Their story adorned wedding banners, marriage chests, and the apartments of noblewomen. The name Talassius, that of a Roman who obtained an especially beautiful Sabine, became a wedding motto. The Sabine legend was considered essential to the founding of Roman family life and to the future of the nation. In the late sixteenth century, it was included in painting cycles illustrating heroic events from Roman history. Giambologna's statue of 1583, christened the Rape of the Sabine Woman soon after its completion, was displayed in the main public square in Florence, the Piazza della Signoria.

Poussin makes clear that the Romans are seizing women against their will. Several Romans have drawn their swords; some chase, grab, or hold the women. The Sabines' expressions are anguished. They kick, struggle, try to escape. Other figures underline the terror of the event. Infants lie abandoned on the bare earth. A distraught old woman and an aged father complete the foreground frieze. Clearly Poussin is suggesting here that women, children, and the elderly pay the price for the "heroic" founding of Rome. Nevertheless, Poussin justifies the incident.

Not only does the artist reflect Roman attitudes by idealizing the crimes of their ancestors, he also accepts the Roman concept of raptus, which was quite different from the modern definition of rape. In ancient Rome, raptus meant "carrying off by force" it was a crime of property and included thefts of all kinds. If violence was a necessary component of this crime, sexual intercourse was not. Similarly, in Poussin's painting, although the sexual aspect is implied, intercourse is not explicitly depicted. Roman law did not view the crime from the woman's point of view. Rather raptus was a crime against the woman's husband or guardian. Poussin reflects this view of rape in the major figure group on the right, which shows a Sabine father struggling against a Roman abductor.

While most of the women resist the Romans and strain toward the right, there is one, in the middle ground, who does not. Rather, she turns to her companion, apparently listening to him, as they stroll off together toward the left. Several factors draw our eye to her: her position, just left of center, the arc of empty space to her right, and the color of her robe, the same blue worn by the large Sabine women in the foreground. With this couple, Poussin reminds the viewer that, as Plutarch had related, the Sabines soon accepted their husbands. This couple serves to down play the ugliness of the event. In fact, Poussin's style - his frozen action, a controlled emotional expression, and carefully ordered composition - serves to distance the viewer from the horror of the event. This work echoes the Roman attitude, typified by Ovid's remark concerning the rape of

the Sabines: "Grant me rewards such as these (and) I would enlist for the wars."

Giambologna, Rape of the Sabine Woman, 1583, Florence, Loggia dei Lanzi.

Levite and His Wife Dining with the Old Man, Surrender of the Wife to the Benjamites, Molestation, Levite Finding his Wife's Corpse, Morgan Picture Bible, ca 1240-55, New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library.

The second type of Rape Wolfthal presents is that of Biblical Imagery. To exemplify this imagery, we are presented with the image depicting "The Story Of the Levite and His Wife". The following summary is again well presented by the author on pages 37-39. It is well worth turning to at this point.

"The clearest example of the alternative view may well be a cycle of illuminations that depicts the Old Testament story of the Levite's wife, which appears in the Morgan Picture Bible, a Parisian manuscript that has been dated between 1240 and 1255. Morgan 638 is richly illuminated and may have been commissioned by the royal court of Louis IX. No original text is preserved: all inscriptions are later additions. The cycle begins on folio 15 verso, at the lower right, with a miniature of the Levite, his wife, and a servant arriving at Gibeah and accepting lodging from an old man.

On the next folio, at the upper left, the couple dines with their host and his daughter. Then, in an episode that is not depicted, a group of Benjamites "besets the old man's house" demanding the Levite so that they might "abuse" him. The host declines, arguing that this would be "against nature" but offers as consolation prize the Levite's wife. In the next scene, at the upper right, the Levite stands in the doorway, surrendering his wife to the armed crowd gathered before him. Below, they molest her. After a night of what can only be described as gang rape, her husband discovers her dead body (scene 5). The next folio shows the Levite bringing his wife's body home and chopping it into twelve pieces, one for each tribe of Israel, so that the rape will be avenged. The cycle concludes with a scene of the ensuing battle.

In contrast to so many depictions of "heroic" rape, the illuminations are clearly not designed for erotic purposes. The Levite's wife is fully clothed except when her body is dismembered. Random arms and legs and spilled guts offer a gruesome, not an erotic, spectacle. Unlike many of the "heroic" images, the Morgan cycle makes clear that the Levite's wife was forced against her will. The Benjamites (scenes 3 and 4) are armed with ax, mace, and sword. When the Levite surrenders his wife to the Benjamites (scene 3), he seizes her by the wrist. Her knitted brow makes evident her displeasure. In the molestation scene (scene 4), she is notice-

ably distressed by the armed men who touch her breast, seize her arms and wrist, and encircle her waist. Even in death (Scene 5), her downturned mouth and puckered brow express her grief.

The victim is here the focus of the illuminations. In the molestation scene the Levite's wife stands frontally, at center stage, her head rising higher than those of her assailants, in a composition reminiscent of images of Christ being tormented. In the next scene, her body is stretched out across the foreground plane, projecting beyond the frame to either side. In the following scenes, she again occupies the foreground and overlaps her husband and his companions. In these illuminations, fingers point to her; eyes turn to her. Attention is focused on her suffering.

Secondary characters reinforce the tragedy of the event. The husband, finding his wife dead (scene 5), raises his hands in shock. His frown, inclined head, and furrowed brow clearly reveal the depth of his grief. In the next scene, one onlooker wrings his hands; others look sorrowful. This interpretation is radically different from those in the "heroic" vein."

The third consideration Wolfthal deals with is the multitude of images which accompany wars. It seems that Rape is expected booty to accommodate Soldiers of War from pre-Christian battles to modern times. The following two paragraphs are from my original comments on this text:

In the Middle Ages, lawmakers determined that a rape victim had to raise "a hue and cry" to determine one's innocence. In the 15th Century, Christine de Pizan, a forward thinking writer, explored social and economic contexts and demanded action against an assault. Sexual assault is not limited to that purported to be by men on women. Themes such as Same Sex Rape, Clergy Rape, and Rape by an older woman on a younger man are explored. In addition, the imposition of sexual prowess upon another person through magic images, the abuse of power in sublimating a young innocent, and colonial considerations of one culture subduing another cultures' women is discussed.

Responses to Rape are viewed from a continuing historical perspective. Victims may have used self-mutilation to protect themselves, they may have mourned, they may have committee suicide. The taking of revenge is explored to justify sexual dishonor. Wolfthal has presented this history of images and concludes that the codes of the past still influence the modern perspective of Rape, Victim and Aggressor.

When I began this article I phrased the question "Rape – A Gender Issue?" for it is a gender issue if we look at only how women have been treated by society throughout the ages. We need to look at these issues for our female students of the future. They need to know their own history, not be skirted around issues and politely "guarded" from these images and "protected" by parents and educators. One only needs to hear the horrific stories from the Second World War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the fierce stories of attack in what was Yugoslavia to know that Rape is a VERY current issue.

What about our male students? Do we need to protect them through education too? Since many of them may be the perpetrators, yes we do. This past summer one of my staff members was asked to fill in for an educator who teaches at a local prison in the Fraser Valley. Although he came back with many stories, the saddest one seemed to be how the older male prisoners would pick straws to "induct" the new young male prisoners. It is pre-determined amongst the prison population who will perform the rape and who will be raped beforehand. Quite the callous introduction! My colleague said the young men who had been raped were in quite comatose positions, crying, crying, crying – and surely this is not overseas. This is RIGHT HERE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA! We need to stop closing our eyes and realize how very important an issue this is. We need, as Art Educators, to start using the myriad of images that have been preserved to address these issues.

For those of you would like to explore "Images Of Rape" further, here are the particulars you will need.

Images of Rape
The "Heroic" Tradition and its Alternatives

By Diane Wolfthal

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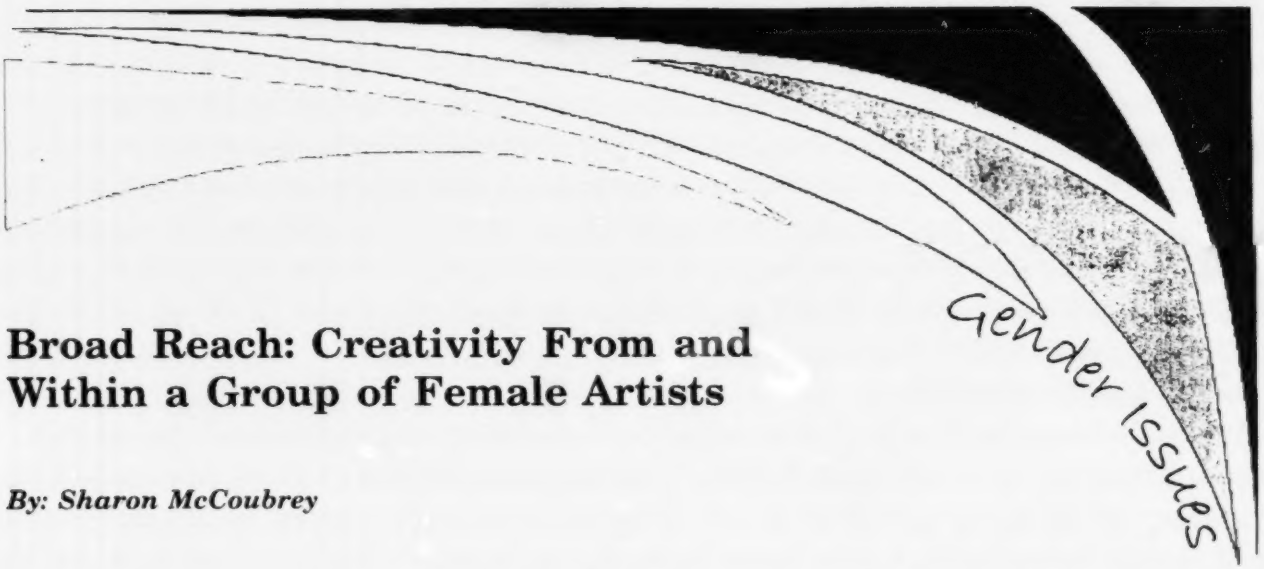


Broad Reach: Creativity From and Within a Group of Female Artists

By: Sharon McCoubrey

I recently encountered a group of women who have formed an artist group called Broad Reach, thereby developing an inspiring way to encourage and stimulate each other's creativity. This approach may be applicable to groups of students in your classes, especially senior students, as a means for debating ideas prior to creative art making. On the other hand it may be just the approach needed to trigger and inspire your own art making, something that always seems to be a challenge for busy educators who do not want to abandon the art part of art teacher, but are always consumed by the teacher part.

Broad Reach came about as one of those truly grass roots developments. A number of women in the Victoria area noticed that they would see each other at various art shows and so began to discuss the art with each other. This led to a suggestion that they should extend their discussions over lunch. One member saw another's work that interested her, and invited her to lunch - a lunch of strangers! The invitation was then extended to others. The enjoyment of these lunches and the value of their conversations about art resulted in these lunches becoming a well established routine.

Eventually, the group grew in numbers as group members invited additional artists to join on the basis of their skills. However, when the number of artists reached 11, it was decided that the doors to the group should be temporarily closed for fear that too large a group would jeopardize some of the strengths of the group.

The lunches are pot luck style and take place in their homes or studios. They have found that this rotation allows them to see each others' working studios and art collections. On one occasion, lunch was a wiener roast on the beach.

Interestingly, these artists do not paint or create art together. They talk about art. They deal with ideas. It is this discussion of issues and ideas within a comfortable, encouraging environment that has become so valuable. The rich exchange of ideas from their varying perspectives inspires these women to approach their own art making in new and fresh ways. The group members commented that it is exhilarating to be around creative people. At the same time, none of the group members would deny that the great tasting lunches are a special part of their time together!

During these lunches, the conversations unfold as the group members ask each other thought provoking questions about art. In addition, they address general issues, such as 'crossings', the ideas of which are then manifested in their art creations. In this way, their conversations deal with both ideas specifically about art and ideas expressed through art. The reflective consideration of ideas through their talking lunches provides the stimuli for the creating of art. In addition, the discussions might settle on group dynamics

"Crossings" by Sylvia Bews-Wright

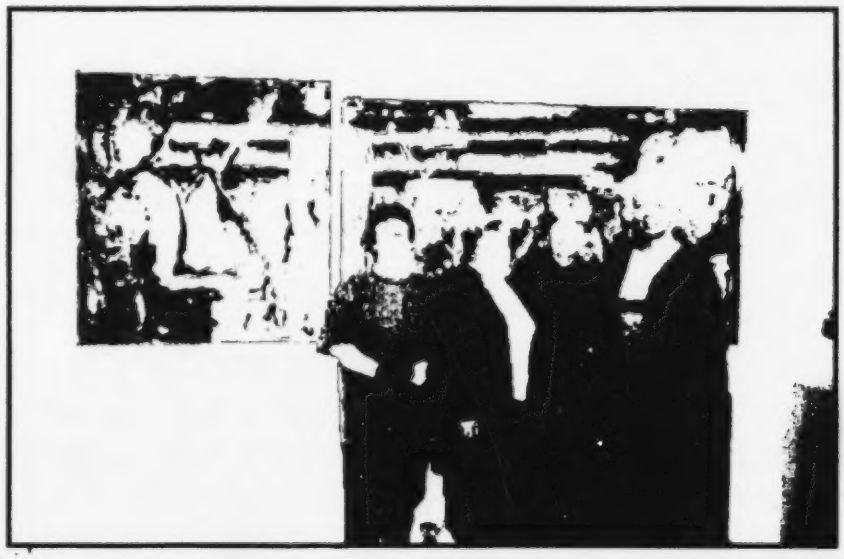
issues, such as 'What do you bring to this group?'

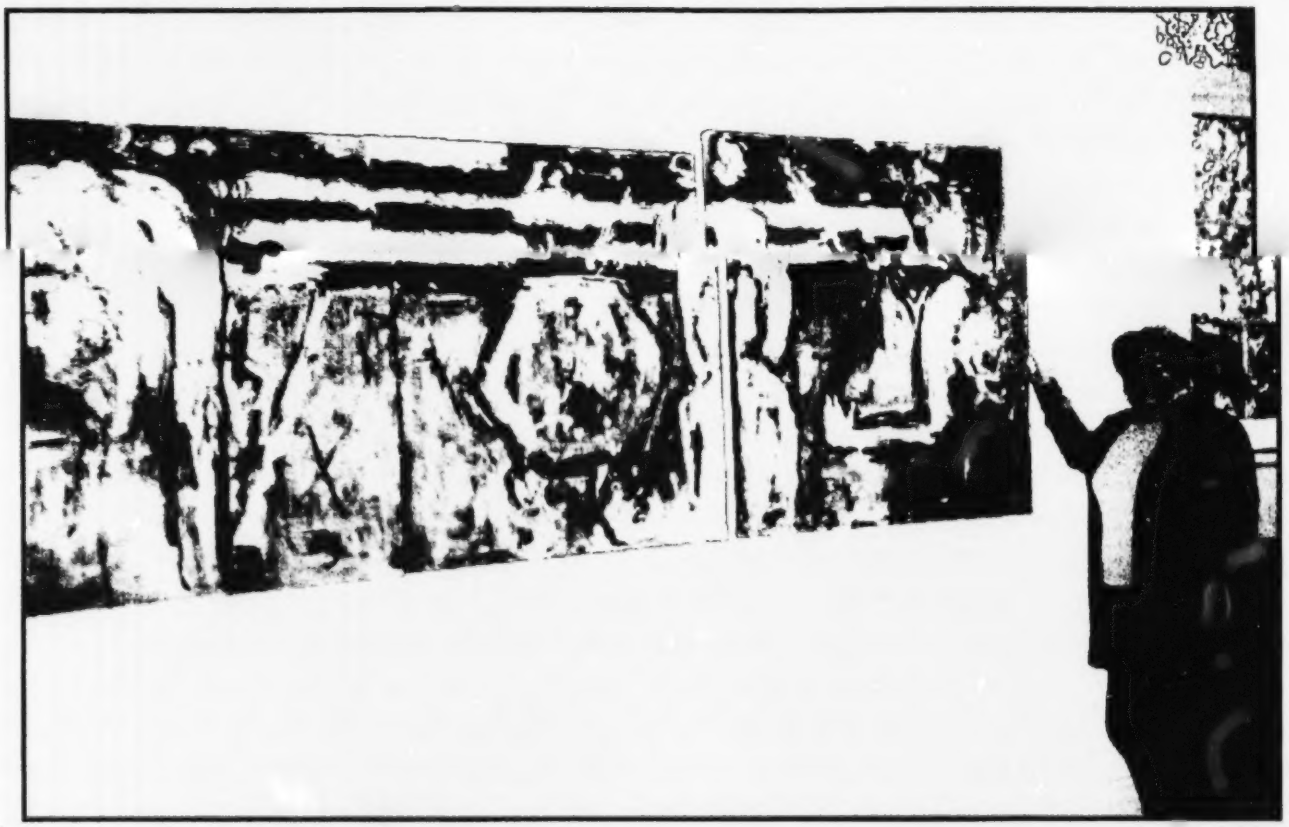
One outcome of Broad Reach's talking lunches is joint shows. Each show is built around a theme which is selected by the group. The artists give consideration to that theme in their discussions, then each artist deals with it in a personal way through her artwork. Some of the themes used for shows include: Just Deserts, Doing Lunch, Self-Portraits and most recently, Crossings. Another unique and intriguing feature of the way this group operates is that even though they will work on the same theme toward a joint show, the artists do not see each others' art works until the show is actually hung. This approach maintains a sense of curiosity right to show time.

Preparation for their joint shows naturally involves taking care of any manner of organizational details. At other times, there are group related business items to attend to. In order to not disturb the special lunches, the group will hold separate business meetings. Their lunch discussions about art are too valuable to turn into business topics.

Their name "Broad Reach" holds significance for this group. The name was selected to express their willingness to go 'way out there' with their ideas and their art shows. Essentially, they are reaching for beyond. Broad Reach also acknowledges the diversity of their backgrounds and personalities, as well as the diversity of their artistic skills and styles. For those familiar with sailing terms, 'Broad Reach' refers to a time when a boat is at cross paths with the wind, a point when there is a risk of tipping the boat, but also a point of high speed and energy. This state of energy and risk is meaningful to this group of artists.

The formalization of this group of artists into Broad Reach, plus their joint exhibitions, their business meetings, their preparation of proposals, etc. are all evidence of an active artist group, but, in their own words, ' the lunches are the key because they deal with ideas!" Listening to these artists speak about the value of their lunches together, it is obvious that their sharing of ideas within their enthusiastic discussions is uplifting to each other personally, but also





inspirational to their art making. I was envious of belonging to such a group. I wonder if I might be lucky enough to somehow, sometime, becoming part of such a group.

The connection of this profile of Broad Reach to the topic of 'Gender Issues in Art Education' may be a bit of a stretch, however, the gender topic does apply. This is a group of women artists, and they did say that one of their discussion topics was 'What is the difference between male and female artists?'

The encouragement and stimulation offered to each of the individual women artists who make up the group Broad Reach may be more complex than merely gaining support by belonging to a group. There are shared experiences and ways of being that are common to all the group members. All are women, and are within a particular stage of their lives. Perhaps this allows an openness and sharing that is possible because such commonalities are a key part of this group. Perhaps the ability to readily relate to other group members is an essential factor that leads to the willingness to 'reach for beyond' in their art creations.

If that isn't sufficient connection, then certainly the profile of a group of artists who have found a way to feed, support and stimulate each other's creative needs is hopefully an inspiring example for any group of artists, female, male, or mixed.

Dr. Sharon McCoubrey teaches in the Bachelor of Education Program at Okanagan University College in Kelowna, BC.

By a Lady

Celebrating Three Centuries of Art by Canadian Women

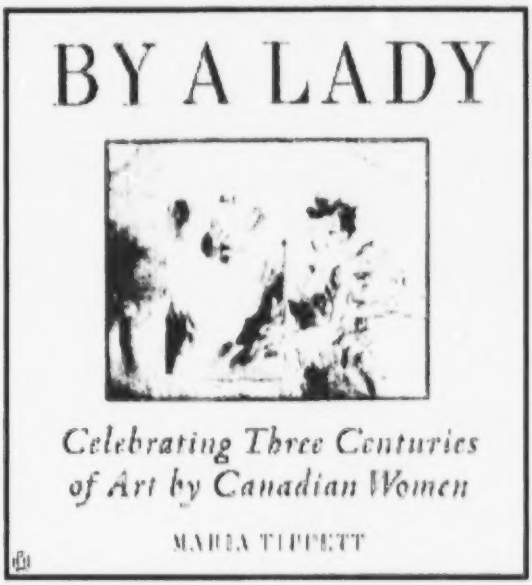
by: Maria Tippett

© 1992

Publisher: Penguin Books

paperback format,

available in most book stores for about $34.00.



This is a resource that is a must for every art classroom, elementary and secondary. Not only is it a good source for information about women artists, it has a Canadian context. In Mary Pratt's words, this book serves to take women artists from "standing like wallflowers around the perimeter of the party" to "including us in the dance."

The organization of the book is chronological, beginning with the initial settlement of Canada, moving through its various stages of development, the two world wars, and through to the artworks created during the 1980's. The profile of women artists is complete, including artists from different parts of the country and from different groups of people. I was introduced to many Canadian women artists I had previously not known about.

The book is inviting in its size and design, with over 200 pages of informative and very readable text, which is interspersed with illustrations on almost every page. These artwork reproductions, in both colour and black and white, are large and fully identified.

The author, Maria Tippett's concluding statement reinforces the value this resource book would serve in all classrooms. "Women's art has sometimes been traditional, sometimes innovative, sometimes gender-centered, sometimes set within existing male genres. But all of it has added to our understanding of Canada and the best of it has expanded our understanding of our individual selves and our humanity." (p. 202)

Reviewed by Sharon McCoubrey

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The National Museum of Women in the Arts Collection

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.
ISBN 0-02-688497-7, 0-02-688497-6

The National Museum of Women in the Arts Collection includes 200 art prints, an idea book, art cards, Museum guide, DE-ROM demo. Also available are CD-ROM and Videodisc.

"NMWA offers the single most important collection of art by women in the world. The core of the permanent collection, which provides a comprehensive survey of art by women from the sixteenth century to the present, was donated by Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay, the museum's founders. In 1982 the Holladays agreed to donate their art and library as the seed from which the museum might grow. Since then the collection has increased substantially through gifts and acquisitions. To promote the study of women artists, NMWA's research facilities contain the most extensive library of information about women artists in the world."

The 200 works photographed are from the museum's permanent collection. While the majority of the Holladay collection represented here is made up of works by American women, many other countries are also represented. In the "Abstract/Nonobjective" series, I found a work by Quebec artist Dorothea Rockburne and also Saskatchewan painter Agnes Martin. There are lesser known works by Georgia O'Keeffe, Frida Kahlo and Mary Cassatt. Also included in the collection are many familiar names such as Kiki Kogelnik, Miriam Schapiro, Grandma Moses, Louise Nevelson, Kathe Kollwitz, Louise Dahl-Wolfe and Maria Martinez.

The art works are divided into several sections: abstract/nonobjective, genre, landscape, narrative, still life, utilitarian and portrait, with an explanation of each category: "Genre scenes depict ordinary people in their ordinary activities such as a domestic interior or rural scene." I found the "Utilitarian" component interesting as it features a number of examples of work of goldsmiths, for example, tea sets and tea caddies. These are artistic areas of endeavour in which women are not traditionally found.

There are 200 large reproductions (40 cm x 30 cm.) printed on heavy card stock. On the reverse side of the image, there is information under six headings: About the Artist, About Art History, About the Artwork, About the Media, and About the Technique. One additional category is Cultural Perspective - "Nell Blaine, along with Helen Frankenthaler, Joan Mitchell, and Grace Hartigan, were among the most important practitioners of Abstract Expressionism in the 1950's." This information gives students ways to connect with other artists with whom they may not have had information. The vocabulary is appropriate for junior through senior secondary. There are also discussion questions, for example, "Do you see a relationship between colours and music in this painting?" Also in the set are the same 200 prints but in a 12.5 x 10

cm format. The small cards contain subject, date, title, media, dimensions, statistical and more specific information about the artist.

The set is accompanied by two soft cover booklets: Museum Guide, an Introduction to Museum Education by Dr. Marilyn J.S. Goodman, Director of Education at the Guggenheim Museum and an Idea Book - Cross-Curricular Activities. The Idea Book provides ideas for how to use the Prints to enrich Reading/Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, or Math as well as the Art Curriculum. General ideas, as well as ones specific to each print, are included.

Our district purchased a set of these for each of the secondary schools as we all felt there was a lack of information regarding women artists.

This resource is available from SRA Art Connections K-5, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., Order Department, 300 Water St. , Whitby, Ontario, LIN 9B6. Toll free order line: 1-800-565-5758, Fax: 1-800-463-5885. The latest (1999) cost quote available is $394.49.

Reviewed by Robin Gore

Pioneering Spirits

The Lives and Times of Remarkable Women Artists in Western History

By Abby Remer

© 1997
Davis Publications
hardback $36.00
ISBN 97192 317 3

This recently published book has attempted to uncover the women artists who have previously been 'hidden in history'. Once again, we can follow a chronologically documented survey of women making art, from 'pre recorded history' through to late modernism and contemporary art. The setting is mainly parts of Europe and North America. There are ample illustrations throughout this book, both black and white as well as colour.

The 150 pages of this book offer helpful explanations of the nature of society at different times in our history, and the role of women within those societies, providing insights into the scarcity of known women artists. Tidbits of information about various cultures and times are presented in small coloured blocks of text in the margin, allowing a quick reference to these helpful explanations. This book also acknowledges many creations, such as various textile works, that might have been known as 'women's work'.

This book is recommended as a valuable resource for instruction or independent research in secondary and post secondary art classes.

Reviewed by Sharon McCoubrey

The Arts and Academic Improvement: What the Evidence Shows

A summary of Harvard Project Zero,

Reviewing Education and the Arts Project (REAP)

By Ellen Winner, Principal Investigator and Lois Hetland, Project Manager

Editor's Note:

The question of whether or not experience in the arts improves achievement in other school subjects has been debated at art education conferences and within journals for several years. Elliot Eisner has offered some clear comments on this debate, previously reported in BCATA publications. The following is a re-print of a Summary circulated by the NAEA, and is included in this Journal to offer additional information and perspective on this debate.

Instrumental Claims for the Arts are Often Invoked

The arts have typically played a relatively unimportant role in American schools. Arts educators have tried to strengthen the position of the arts in our schools by arguing that the arts can be used to buttress the 3Rs. The arts, they said, could help children learn to read and write and calculate and understand scientific concepts. The reasoning was clear: perhaps schools under pressure would value the arts because the arts strengthen skills in "valued" areas. This approach became a favored strategy in the United States for keeping the arts in the schools and for making sure that every child had access to arts education.

Instrumental Claims are a Double-Edged Sword

There is danger in such reasoning. If the arts are given a role in our schools because people believe the arts cause academic improvement, then the arts will quickly lose their position if academic improvement does not result, or if the arts are shown to be less effective than the 3Rs in promoting literacy and numeracy. Instrumental claims for the arts are a double-edged sword. It is implausible to suppose that the arts can be as effective a means of teaching an academic subject as is direct teaching of that subject. And thus, when we justify the arts by their secondary, utilitarian value, the arts may prove to have fewer payoffs than academics. Arts educators should never allow the arts to be justified wholly or even primarily in terms of what the arts can do for mathematics or reading. The arts must be justified in terms of what the arts can teach that no other subject can teach.

What is the Evidence for Instrumental Claims?

What is the research base on which instrumental claims for arts education are made? REAP has conducted the first comprehensive and qualitative study of what the research on academic outcomes of arts education really shows.

Comprehensive syntheses of 188 Reports

REAP conducted a comprehensive search for all studies from 1950-1999 (published and unpublished, and appearing in English) that have tested the claim that studying the arts

leads to some form of academic improvement. Searchers turned up 11,467 articles, books, theses, conference presentations, technical reports, unpublished papers, and unpublished data. Irrelevant reports were then weeded out, along with advocacy pieces and program descriptions lacking an empirical test. One hundred eighty-eight reports investigating the relationship between one or more arts areas to one or more academic areas were retained.

A total of 275 effect size rs were then calculated. An effect size r is a number ranging from -1.0 to +1.0 that represents the strength of the relationship between two variables. An effect size of +1.0 would mean a perfect positive correlation between two variables -e.g., the more air you put in your tires, the greater the air pressure. An effect size of r of .10 is considered small in size, comparable to the difference in height between 15 and 16 year old girls (.5 inches). An effect size r of .24 is considered medium in size, comparable to the average height difference in 14 to 18 year old girls of one inch. And an effect size r of .37 is considered large in size, equivalent to the difference in IQ between typical college freshman and those who have attained doctorates.

A set of 10 meta-analyses were conducted. A meta-analysis combines and compares effect sizes across groups of studies that address similar research questions. Statistical analyses are then used to determine whether the effect size can be generalized to new studies on the same research question. If the effect size cannot be generalized to new studies, we must conclude that the finding is not reliable and is not likely to hold up.

Three areas were found in which a substantial number of studies have demonstrated a clear causal link between education in an art form and achievement in a non-arts, academic area. The effect sizes found in these three areas ranged from small to large. Although small or medium differences may seem trivial, they may in fact turn out to be of practical importance. For instance, the relationship between taking an aspirin a day and reduction of heart attack risk is only r=.03! Thus when judging the value of any intervention, we must attend not only to the size of the effect but also to the importance of the outcome compared to the cost of the intervention in effort and dollars. If a small effect size is due to scores on standardized tests of mathematics increasing an average of 3 points, that seems of little consequence. However, if a small effect size is due to even a few children staying in school as opposed to dropping out, that is of great consequence.

We found three areas in which clear causal links could be demonstrated. However, in seven other areas no reliable causal link was found. The lack of findings in these seven areas is attributable to one or more of three factors: in some cases the failure to find a causal link probably reflects the fact that there is in fact no causal link; in some cases causal link was found but it was not strong enough to be reliably generalized to other studies; and in other cases, the lack of findings may have been due to the small number of studies carried out on a given research question.

Three Areas Where Reliable Causal Links Were Found

Listening to Music and Spatial-Temporal Reasoning:

Based on 26 reports (36 effect sizes), a medium-sized causal relationship was found between listening to music and temporary improvement in spatial-temporal reasoning. However, there was wide variation in the studies, with some showing the effect clearly and many not showing the effect at all. Moreover, the existing research does not reveal conclusively why listening to music affects spatial-temporal thinking. For education, such a finding is of interest because it suggests that music and spatial reasoning are related psychologically and perhaps neurologically as well. Further research is needed to understand the mechanism by which certain types of music influence spatial skills.

Learning to Play Music and Spatial Reasoning:

Based on 19 reports (29 effect sizes), a large causal relationship was found between learning to make music and spatial-temporal reasoning. The effect was greater when standard music notation was learned as well, but even without notation the effect was large. The value for education is greater here, since the effect works equally for both general

and at risk populations, costs little since it is based on standard music curricula, and influences many students (69 of every 100, 3 - 12 year old students). Of course we must still determine the value of improved spatial skills for success in school. Spatial skills might or might not be of benefit to students, depending on how subjects are taught. For example, mathematics or geography might be taught spatially, and if they are, then students with strong spatial abilities should have an advantage in these subjects. Sadly, many schools offer few chances to apply spatial abilities.

Classroom Drama and Verbal Skills:

Based on 80 reports (107 effect sizes), a causal link was found between classroom drama (enacting texts) and a variety of verbal areas. Most were of medium size (oral understanding/recall of stories, reading readiness, reading achievement, oral language, writing), one was large (written understanding/recall of stories) and one was small and could not be generalized to new studies (vocabulary). In all cases, students who enacted texts were compared to students who read the same texts but did not enact them. Drama not only helped children's verbal skills with respect to the texts enacted; it also helped children's verbal skills when applied to new, non-enacted texts. Thus, drama helps to build verbal skills that transfer to new materials. Such an effect has great value for education: verbal skill is highly valued, adding such drama techniques costs little in terms of effort or expense, and a high proportion of students are influenced by such curricular changes.

Seven Areas Where No Reliable Causal Links Were Found

Arts-Rich Education and Verbal and Mathematics Scores/ Grades:

Based on 31 reports (66 effect size), a small to medium correlation was found between studying arts and academic achievement as measured primarily by test scores. However, no evidence was found that studying the arts causes academic indicators to improve. The correlational findings can be explained by non-causal mechanisms. For example, high achieving students (no matter what their ethnic or racial group, no matter what their social class) may choose to be guided to study the arts. This would then result in the finding that students who take arts courses are also high-achieving, high test-scoring students.

Arts-Rich Education and Creative Thinking:

Based on 4 reports (6 effect sizes), no relationship was found between studying arts and verbal creativity test measures. A small to medium sized relationship was found between studying arts and figural creativity tests (which themselves are visual tests) but this relationship could not be generalized to new studies.

Learning to Play Music and Mathematics:

Based on 6 reports (6 effect sizes), a small causal relationship was found between music training and math. However, while 3 of these studies produced medium effects, 3 produced either very small effects or none at all. Thus, more studies are needed before any firm conclusions can be drawn.

Learning to Play Music and Reading:

Based on 6 reports (6 effect sizes), a small relationship was found between music and reading but this relationship could not be generalized to new studies.

Visual Arts and Reading:

Based on 5 reports in which visual arts was taught separately from reading (7 effect sizes), a very small relationship between visual arts and reading was found, but this relationship could not be generalized to new studies. This effect was entirely due to reading readiness outcomes (which are themselves visual), and did not hold up for reading achievement outcomes. Based on 4 reports in which visual arts were integrated with reading instruction (4 effect sizes), a medium sized relationship was found between integrated arts/reading instruction and reading outcomes. However, this result could not be generalized to new studies.

Dance and Reading:

Based on 4 reports (4 effect sizes), a small relationship between dance and reading was found, but this relationship could not be generalized to new studies.

Dance and Nonverbal Reasoning:

Based on 3 reports (4 effect sizes), a small to medium sized causal relationship was found between dance and improved visual-spatial skills. The value of this effect is unclear, since it is based on so few reports.

Policy Implications

These mixed findings should make it clear that, even in cases where arts programs add value to non-arts academic outcomes, it is dangerous to justify arts education by secondary, non-arts effects. Doing so puts the arts in a weakened and vulnerable position. Arts educators must build justifications based on what is inherently valuable about the arts themselves, even when the arts contribute secondary benefits. Just as we do not (and could not) justify the teaching of history for its power to transfer to mathematics, we must not allow policy makers to justify (or reject) the arts based on their alleged power to transfer to academic subject matters.

A Better Justification for the Arts in Education

Let's stop requiring more of the arts than of other subjects. The arts are the only school subjects that have been challenged to demonstrate transfer as a justification for their usefulness. If we required physical education to demonstrate transfer to science, the results might be no better, and probably would be worse. So, it is notable that the arts can demonstrate any transfer at all. Perhaps with more attention to how the arts foster transfer, we can understand how to exploit that capacity further. But even when the relationships are understood, we still maintain that the justification for arts programs must be based on their inherent merit.

Let's stop justifying the arts instrumentally. This is a dangerous (and particularly American) practice. Anyone who looks closely, as we have done, will see that these claims do not hold up unequivocally. Those who live by instrumental claims risk dying by such claims.

The arts offer a way of thinking unavailable in other disciplines. The same might be said of athletics. Suppose coaches began to claim that playing baseball increased students' mathematical ability because of the complex score keeping involved. Then suppose researchers set out to test this and found that the claim did not hold up. Would school boards react by cutting the budget for baseball? Of course not. Because whatever positive academic side effects baseball might or might not have, schools believe sports are inherently good for kids. We should make the same argument for the arts: the arts are good for our children, irrespective of any non-arts benefits that the arts may in some cases have. Just as a well-rounded education requires education of the body through physical education, a balanced education requires study of the arts.

Let's bet on history. Of course, we do not know for sure what is the best education for children to ensure that they will grow up to lead productive and happy lives. But the arts have been around longer than the sciences; cultures are judged on the basis of their arts; and most cultures and most historical eras have not doubted the importance of studying the arts. Let's assume, then, that the arts should be a part of every child's education and treat the arts as seriously as we treat mathematics or reading or history or biology. Let's remember why societies have always included the arts in every child's education. The reason is simple. The arts are a fundamentally important part of culture, and an education without them is an impoverished education leading to an impoverished society. Studying the arts should not have to be justified in terms of anything else. The arts are as important as the sciences: they are time-honored ways of learning, knowing, and expressing.

Where Should Researchers Go from Here?

Researchers should try to make sense of the claim frequently made by schools that when the arts are given a serious role in the curriculum, academic achievement improves. While we should never justify the arts on non-arts outcomes, we believe there is value to the search for such links. Researchers should continue to look for, try out, and specify whether - and if so, how - the arts can serve as vehicles for transfer. Educators could then exploit their relationship.

We recommend two kinds of studies to advance our understanding of the relationship between arts and non-arts

outcomes: theory-building studies and theory-driven experiments. Both types require rigorous methods. Here is an example of each type.

A Theory-Building Study: What Happens in Schools When the Arts are Given a Prominent Role?

Our research shows that studying the arts does not, in and of itself, lead to improved test scores. Yet schools with strong arts often report a rise in test scores. Why?

One possibility is that the same schools that treat the arts seriously institute other kinds of innovations that are favorable to academic learning. For instance, these schools may become more inquiry-oriented, more project-based, more demanding of high standards, and more focused on processes that lead to excellence. Educators and policy makers need to understand what comes along with the arts.

To discover this, researchers need to carry out ethnographic studies of exemplary schools that grant the arts a serious role in the curriculum. What kinds of innovations have been made in these schools to foster excellence? If certain innovations are always found in schools that grant the arts a serious role, this finding could account for why schools with serious arts programs have high academic performance.

A Theory-Driven Experiment: Are the Arts Motivational Entry Points for Non-Academic Students?

While we oppose justifying the arts based on their secondary effects, there may well be educational value in programs that integrate the arts as vehicles that foster understanding of non-arts content. Perhaps the arts do cause academic achievement, but only for a certain type of student, and only when the arts are integrated with an academic subject. In schools that make the arts important, academic subjects are often taught "through" the arts. The arts are used as entry points into academic subjects (e.g., role-playing in history courses; analysis of rhythms in a proportions unit in mathematics). Perhaps certain students -those lacking academic interests or strengths in specific subjects - benefit. If these students experience success in the art form linked to the academic subject, they may then believe they can succeed in the academic subject. Or, if they experience success in the subject when it is viewed through an artistic lens, their willingness to stay with the subject may increase. Increased confidence should lead to increased motivation and effort, which in turn should result in higher achievement.

Experimental studies thus far have not tested this hypothesis. What is needed are comparisons of academically strong vs. academically at-risk students taught the same subject matter with and without the arts as entry points. Can we identify students who first experience success in the art form, and subsequently go on to show heightened interest and effort in the academic subject matter? And do levels of interest and/or motivation predict later achievement in that subject matter?

It is also possible that all students would benefit from an arts-integrated approach, even those who are high achievers to begin with, simply because an arts-integrated approach makes any subject more interesting. This hypothesis also deserves a rigorous test.

Research in the two directions suggested here can help us to understand the puzzling finding that when the arts are granted a serious role in our schools, academic achievement often rises. It is time to look seriously at the possibility that the arts are associated with academic achievement because of other academic innovations that are made in school that bring in the arts, and/or because the arts provide engaging and motivational entry points into academic study for the many students who do not thrive in the structures and cultures of our schools today.

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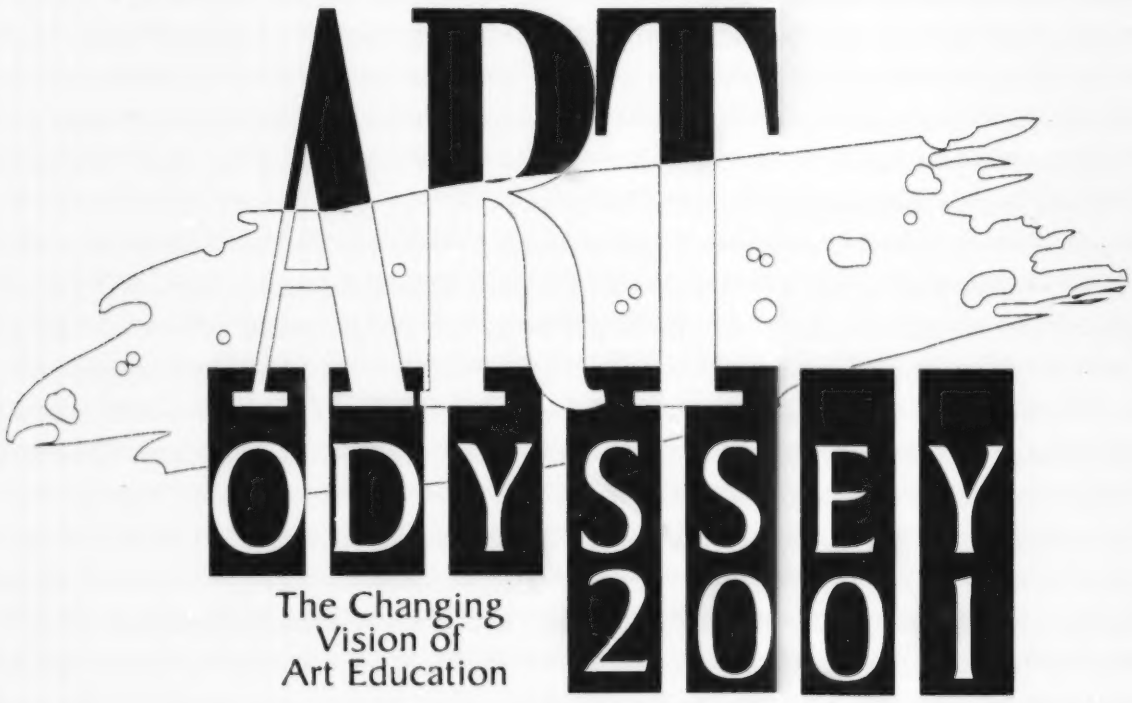

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